

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 042290  
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S E C R E T STATE 042290

EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG FROM UNA

FOL AMMAN 1545 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BEIRUT CAIRO DAMASCUS  
JERUSALEM JIDDA TEL AVIV FEB 15, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

S E C R E T AMMAN 1545

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PGOV, PBOR, JO, SY, PLO, XF

SUBJECT: JORDAN, SYRIA, AND THE PLO--COURT CHIEF SHARAF

1. IN DISCUSSION WITH SHARAF FEBRUARY 14 HE COVERED  
PRESENT STATE OF JORDAN'S RELATIONS WITH SYRIA AND THE  
PLO AND MENTIONED BRIEFLY SAUDI ARABIA.

2. WITH RESPECT TO SYRIA, SHARAF ACKNOWLEDGED THAT  
RELATIONS HAD BECOME A LITTLE FROSTY SINCE KING MADE  
CLEAR IN PUBLIC HIS SUPPORT FOR SADAT. RECENTLY KING  
HAD SPOKEN OUT FAVORABLY WHEN ASKED A PLANTED  
QUESTION BY THE PRESS ON JORDAN-SYRIAN RELATIONS.

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PRIME MINISTER HAD ALSO PRAISED SECTION OF ALGIERS  
COMMUNIQUE REQUESTING SUPPORT FOR SYRIA IN PUBLIC.  
JORDANIANS SAY SYRIA IS INSISTING THAT JORDAN  
REMAIN "NEUTRAL" IN THE DISPUTE BETWEEN EGYPT AND  
SYRIA OR BETTER YET SUPPORT THE SYRIAN SIDE.  
SHARAF INSISTS THAT JORDAN IS NOT NEUTRAL AND  
CLEARLY SUPPORTS SADAT'S INITIATIVE EVEN THOUGH

IT OBEJCTED TO THE INITIAL SURPRISE. HE SAYS WE HAVE TOLD SYRIA ALSO THAT WE OBJECT TO THEIR SPLITTING OFF FROM THE NEGOTIATING EFFORTS. SHARAF ADMITTED THAT KING BEGAN ORIGINALLY RESPONDING TO SADAT INITIATIVE BY CRITICIZING SADAT'S METHODS AND SYRIA'S REACTION WITH EQUAL FERVOR. BUT HE HAS NOW SHIFTED MORE TOWARD SADAT.

3. WHILE I WAS IN HIS OFFICE SHARAF WAS CALLED BY ABDUL HALIM KHADDAM. SHARAF AND HIS WIFE WERE INVITED FOR A FEW DAYS' VISIT IN SYRIA. SHARAF SAID THIS IS THE FIRST CONTACT WHICH SYRIANS HAVE MADE WITH JORDAN AT HIS LEVEL AND CONSIDERS THE OPENING SIGNIFICANT. KHADDAM MADE CLEAR CONTACT WAS AT PRESIDENT ASAD'S DIRECTION ACCORDING TO SHARAF. SHARAF WILL BE SPENDING NEXT WEEK OR SO IN LONDON WITH KING AND TOLD KHADDAM HE WILL BE IN TOUCH ABOUT VISIT TO SYRIA AS SOON AS HE RETURNS FROM EUROPE. SHARAF CONSIDERS THIS PART OF A PERSONAL AND CONTINUING EFFORT TO EDUCATE KHADDAM ON THE INTRICACIES AND MYSTERIES OF WESTERN POLITICS OF WHICH SHARAF CONSIDERS HIMSELF SOMETHING OF AN EXPERT. SHARAF ATTRIBUTES INVITATION DIRECTLY TO STATEMENTS LAST WEEK BY JORDAN AND SAID THIS IS ANOTHER PROOF THAT ARABS AND PARTICULARLY SYRIANS ARE AS MUCH, IF NOT MORE, FASCINATED BY WORDS AND DELCARA-  
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TIONS THAN BY DEEDS OR RESULTS.

4. ON PLO, SHARAF CONFIRMED THAT ARAFAT SENT HUSSEIN A LETTER STATING HIS POSITION AND ASKING FOR SUPPORT. ROUGHLY SIMILAR LETTERS WERE SENT TO ALL THE OTHER ARAB KINGS AND PRESIDENTS WITH WHICH PLO MAINTAINS RELATIONS. KING HAD BEEN ON VERGE OF SEEKING OUT PLO AND THEREFORE RESPONDED GENERALLY BUT POSITIVELY. ARAFAT SENT SECOND LETTER ASKING FOR HUMANITARIAN HELP TO IMPRISONED MEMBERS OF PLO IN WEST BANK AND FOR PALESTINIANS IN CAMPS. KING REPLIED WITH ANOTHER POSITIVE LETTER SAYING GENERALLY THAT JORDAN READY TO DO ALL IT COULD TO HELP BROTHER PALESTINIANS. WITH PASSAGE OF LETTERS THERE WAS ALSO PASSAGE OF ORAL MESSAGES: FROM THE PLO ASKING FOR A MEETING AND FROM JORDAN SAYING PLO WAS WELCOME. PLO ASKED FOR FORMAL INVITATION AND JORDAN REPLIED IT NOT NECESSARY. JORDAN HAS MADE CLEAR THAT LEVEL OF TALKS SHOULD BE BELOW THAT WHICH WOULD BRING ARAFAT TO AMMAN. RIGHT NOW, GIVEN RATHER MASSIVE DISARRAY IN ARAB RANKS, JORDAN IN NO HURRY TO RESUME DIALOGUE AND WILL

PROBABLY COOL IT. PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF TALKS WITH  
PLO WILL BE ON GENERAL TOPIC OF HOW ARAB UNITY CAN BE  
PUT BACK TOGETHER AFTER SADAT'S INITIATIVES.  
NO INTENTION ON PART OF JORDAN AT DISCUSSING DETAILS OF  
HOW AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES PLO MIGHT OR COULD BE  
REPRESENTED IN ANY FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS IN WHICH JORDAN  
ALSO MIGHT JOIN.

5. SHARAF INDICATED THAT JORDANIANS HAVE DECIDED  
IT WOULD BE WISE FOR GOJ NOT TO APPROACH SAUDIS FURTHER  
WITH REQUESTS FOR MONEY. ON BASIS OF SAUDI REACTIONS  
TO EMBASSY JIDDA APPROACHES, I TOLD HIM WE WOULD  
GENERALLY SUPPORT THAT JUDGMENT. I DID HOWEVER MAKE  
EXCEPTION OF CASE OF FY 76 FMS PAYMENTS AND HE  
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AGREED TO REVIEW THIS WITH PRIME MINISTER BADRAN. PICKERING  
UNQUOTE VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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